

Monmouth County Library Commission Minutes
December 8, 2015
Headquarters

Present: Chairperson Renee Swartz; Commissioners Don Burden, Peter Doyle, James Gray, and Frank Wells; Freeholder Lillian Burry, Liaison; Director Judith Tolchin.

Guests: Heidi Amici, Pat Findra, Marilyn DeJesus, Kim Avagliano, Donna Mansfield, Rick Brancadora, Muriel Smith, Joan Moss, Jack Livingstone, Janet Dill, Della Benevides, and Betsy Wattley.

The meeting convened at 11:10 AM.

Chairperson Renee Swartz welcomed all in attendance. Everyone stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairperson Renee Swartz opened the meeting of December 8, 2015 with the following statement:

“The Library Commission has complied with the regular requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act by giving written notice to the Press and County Clerk’s Office and by posting on the Library web page the date, time, and place of the meeting.”

Opening Statement by Chairperson Renee Swartz:

Mrs. Swartz welcomed everyone, and stated that those in attendance were the heart of the Monmouth County Library. She suggested that today was a celebration of us all, noting the very historic year that we have had together. Together we begin a new chapter in the Monmouth County Library, as we take a new direction and a new position with a new team in place. The Commission has worked very diligently in the last two years to find a new direction.

Mrs. Swartz announced the new Director Judi Tolchin, the new Assistant Director Heidi Amici, and the new Branch Manager of Headquarters Donna Mansfield. The Commission was proud to announce these positions were filled from within. Although an extensive, thorough search was undertaken from the outside, the Commission was both pleased and delighted the talent was found from within; professionalism and expertise is home-grown within Monmouth County.

Mrs. Swartz welcomed Muriel Smith, the library’s public relations consultant.

Mrs. Swartz voiced her excitement to hear the Department Heads, and all they have done within this last year. She noted the Library stands upon the credibility, work, and the collective efforts of the staff.

Mrs. Swartz thanked Freeholder Lillian Burry, the liaison to the Library. She noted Mrs. Burry was an invaluable resource and adviser, and thanked her for her counseling and guidance to the Library Commission.

Mrs. Swartz thanked Commissioners, who give up their time, energy, passion, and expertise to enhance the mission of the Library and keep the Library moving forward.

Mrs. Swartz thanked all in attendance as she looks forward to 2016, the year in which we will build upon our talents to widen our boundaries, enhance our services, add new programs, and celebrate the printed word in all of its new forms. Mrs. Swartz noted the Library is a great source and resource that we can all enjoy, which we will continue with our new, vibrant team.

Mrs. Swartz gave a heartfelt message of thanks to Jack Livingstone on behalf of the Commission and staff for all his years of service, dedication, and accomplishments for the Monmouth County Library, the State Library, and for keeping jazz alive. She noted Mr. Livingstone has been working for forty-two years, and read his citation from the Monmouth County Library Commission.

Freeholder Lillian Burry noted that John H. Livingstone himself was the Monmouth County Library. Mr. Livingstone is a special person, and she noted her excitement for seeing him today. All rose for a standing ovation in honor of Mr. Livingstone.

Mrs. Swartz thanked Janet Dill, the Master Gardener representative, for the absolutely magnificent job that the Master Gardeners have done to enhance the appearance of the Eastern Branch Library. Mrs. Swartz disseminated before and after pictures, which reflect the devotion of the Master Gardeners in their efforts. Mrs. Swartz thanked Commissioner Donald Burden, the mayor of Shrewsbury, for introducing us to the Master Gardeners, and encouraging them to take the project as a community service. Mrs. Swartz announced the citation from the Commission to the Master Gardeners for the wonderful job they have done.

Janet Dill noted she was at the wrong place and the wrong time, but noted Mr. Burden is a delightful man and citizen. She has always stressed she is one of the seven, and this has been a team effort, and it has been their pleasure. The purpose of the Master Gardeners is to educate and serve the residents of Monmouth County. Janet Dill thanked the Commission.

Mrs. Swartz read the citation from the Commission praising the work of the Master Gardeners.

Department Head Reports:

Judi Tolchin noted that the Monmouth County Library is a family, and acknowledged the loss of one of our own, Gerald Zuckerman, who worked for nine years as a dedicated Library employee. He worked at Headquarters most recently, but was also at Marlboro. He really was an outstanding face of the Library, and his passing will be such a loss to our library family. We express our condolences to his family. All in attendance shared a moment of silence.

Judi stated she is a fortunate Library Director, as she has such a wonderful team of employees, a great staff who brings forth our mission. It is with her pleasure that Judi presents part of our team, who help guide the Library forward every day.

Heidi Amici – Assistant Director, the heart of our technology efforts

- Heidi presented a draft of the new public face for the catalog. We are trying very hard to make a cool, interesting touch-screen compatible catalog. Heidi noted there will be a better integration of databases, smoother ability to place holds, and combine ebooks with regular books. The new catalog will be a one stop shop.
- 12 hours of training have been done to further enhance the new catalog.
- By March we would like to be up and running with the new catalog.
- Ebooks use has increased in 2015, 50% of ebooks are downloaded to mobile devices such as phones and tablets.
- We hope in the future fines can be paid online.
- Previously Eastern Branch and Headquarters were on the county's network, but will no longer be due to security concerns. Accordingly, Eastern Branch will move from a 10mg line to a 100 mg line. They should really feel the speed increase within the next few months.
- The new catalog will also allow for separate searching just within one library, as opposed to the whole system.
- Mobile Circ is working; the iPads will have a mobile scanner which will allow check-outs. This would allow for registering patrons at a fair, or checking out patrons in the lobby during a program.
- The Launchpad's for Children are up and running.

Pat Findra – Coordinator of Children's Services

- Pat presented pictures from the children's programs at various branch and member libraries.
- Baby storytime is the most well attended program, followed by elementary school programs.
- Tween programming (children in grades 3-6) has been a new endeavor, with mixed results. This needs to be further developed in the future.
- Monmouth County Library's first celebration of Maker's Day was a success. Maker's Day is a statewide initiative held in March, took place in Eastern Branch Library. Over 300 people attended within 2 hours.
- The Fire and Ice Festival Book Fair in March at Headquarters was a success, engaging 700 young people and their families.

- “Every Hero Has a Story” was the summer reading club theme of 2015, and showcased heroes in all shapes and sizes, from police to superheroes. Every branch and member library received materials for capes.
- There was a strong turnout for the *Alice in Wonderland* program series.
- There are three new AWE Early Literacy stations.
- Kid-friendly tablets, Launchpads, will be used in-house at library branches. They have theme-based education software, and they are not wi-fi enabled.
- There have been two retirements, Daniel Emrick is the new Library Assistant, and Marissa Chimento is the new part-time Library Associate. Marissa Chimento is enrolled in library school, and Kate Benedict has completed her master's degree in June. Laura Migliore is the new assistant coordinator.

Marilyn DeJesus – Branch Services, keeping branches staffed

- Things are more stable this year than last: Judi Tolchin, Library Director; Heidi Amici, Assistant Director; Donna Mansfield, Headquarters Branch Manager.
- Five of our Library Associates have completed their MLIS degrees, and they are now librarians.
- Sue Domas, a long-time library employee has become the Wall Township Branch Manager this year.
- Eleven vacancies have been filled, five part-time and six full-time. These employees were either monitors or seasonal employees.
- There have been eight seasonal employees hired, some of which we hope to come on as permanent employees.
- In 2015 twelve permanent employees were lost, nine part-time and three full-time.
- Three retirements will be coming up in January and February of 2016: one full-time clerk driver, an Allentown Branch Manager, and a part-time clerk driver.
- The bottom line for staffing here is that we still have eighteen vacancies to fill, plus the additional three in 2016. Somehow we have managed to keep our branch and member libraries staffed, which is a credit to everyone who has stepped up to the many challenges.
- We have a lot to do, but we are much more hopeful at the end of the year, then we were at the start.
- Safety is an important issue at the library. Libraries serve a broad spectrum of people. To help us become better informed with handling these incidents, Heidi Amici has

arranged for staff training with the director of Monmouth Medical Center's Crisis Services. This training will take place in January and be mandatory.

- Our 2016 mission will be to move forward and grow so we may improve, advance, and educate ourselves and our patrons.
- Marilyn circulated a handout of fun-facts, including statistics of the highest circulated materials.

Donna Mansfield – Public Relations Coordinator, future Branch Manager of Headquarters

- There have been many successful programs such as Albert Einstein Day, 150th Civil War Anniversary, One Man Show with Andrew Zelon, and *Alice in Wonderland* programs.
- There were nine jazz concerts, and nine other musical concerts, and three plays.
- Other notable programs include a recurring yoga program, tai chi, horse month, a concert with a Grammy-nominated singer, and a speech with a survivor of the Nanking massacre.
- The “Meet the Director” event was successful.
- 5.5 tons of food were collected for the Food for Fines program, which accounts for over 8,700 meals.
- AARP tax help was a success; Donna noted the help is given in a multitude of languages.
- Regarding staffing, Coleen Berry left, Stephanie Acosta transferred to another position and Veronica Stevens is coordinating young adult events.

Rick Brancadora – Videographer, getting information to the public

- Television has become more than a box at home.
- Local community access television is very much a part of our promotional plan.
- Rick presented a video to the audience reflecting all that can be done with a library card. The video also showed a multitude of programs throughout the year.
- Rick stated it was a privilege to serve the Library and the people of Monmouth County.

Kim Avagliano – Branch Manager of the Eastern Branch Library

- Kim presented pictures of Eastern Branch Library throughout 2015.
- There have been wonderful island plantings done by the Master Gardeners of Monmouth County.
- The meeting rooms have been painted and the carpets have been cleaned.

- The illuminated signs have been fixed.
- There have been many wonderful programs, including poetry month, author visits, horse month, meet the puppies, *Alice in Wonderland* programs, and a Frank Sinatra program.
- Kim stated next year there will be art for adults programs, advances in career center programs, and rearranging collections for better ease of access.

Judi Tolchin stated this was a year of transition at the Monmouth County Library. She thanked each and every Library Commissioner for their help and dedication, Freeholder Burry for her tremendous support of the Library and all of the Department Heads.

A motion was made to recess for a location change to the Administration Conference Room by James Grey and seconded by Frank Wells; unanimously approved.

The meeting recessed at 12:23 p.m.

Minutes:

Present: Chairperson Renee Swartz; Commissioners Grace Abramov, Don Burden, Peter Doyle, James Gray, Nancy Grbelja, and Frank Wells; Freeholder Lillian Burry, Liaison; Director Judith Tolchin.

Guests: Muriel Smith and Tim Duffy, Brookdale student

The meeting reconvened at 12:40 p.m.

There was a discussion between Renee Swartz and Grace Abramov about whether to change the meeting time; it was decided the meeting time would be kept at noon.

Mrs. Swartz discussed the locations of the meetings, and decided they would select various branches to hold the Commission Meetings in Fall 2016 at a later date.

A motion to accept the minutes from the November 10th meeting was made by Frank Wells and seconded by Jim Gray; approved without changes.

A motion to accept the closed executive minutes from the November 10th meeting was made by Frank Wells and seconded by Jim Gray; approved without changes.

Chairperson's Report

Mrs. Swartz congratulated Muriel, and expressed the Commission's excitement to work with her in the coming year. She noted Muriel was a needed asset, as there has been very little coverage in the paper.

Mrs. Swartz noted that the Frank Sinatra program was featured in the paper, and there was a wonderful turnout. Lillian Burry informed the Commission there was now a "Library News" segment on her fiOS channel 38, which is good to see. Mrs. Swartz stated we need to work together to provide information

to various outlets. Muriel stated there would be no guarantee, but Renee ensured this would put us at least halfway there. Mrs. Burry stated there is a full page of Library news in the *Colts Neck Journal*, and if they are doing it there, other municipalities can do this as well. Renee stated it would be best to have Muriel access what are the best avenues to proceed. Muriel can give a report to the Commission so we can build a plan for publicity.

Mrs. Swartz praised the holiday greeting card which will be attached to the member cookie trays. The cards will show the re-colored Monmouth County Library logo. As the web-page is re-done, staff agreed that additional color elements to the logo would enhance visual appeal, while still keeping the logo essentially the same. Mrs. Swartz requested commentary on the logo; the Commission feels the amended, re-colored logo is acceptable and something we can move forward with.

Commissioner Don Burden inquired whether Muriel will be using opportunities with Comcast and Brookdale TV station as well, or will Muriel be sticking strictly to print. Muriel stated she would be sticking to print, as she never explored those avenues of publicity. Freeholder Burry brought up the "Monmouth in Focus" program, run by the students of Communications High School, and she stated she can introduce Muriel to them and their facilities.

Judi added that Rick Brancadora is typically the person who interfaces with the cable networks to promote the library. Renee Swartz spoke to Rick Brancadora's presentation at the Department Head meeting, and expressed that we do not use his skills as much as we should. There is potential for an animated, interesting exposure. We need to think about how his time should be spent, and think about how we should better use him as a promotional aspect. Don Burden brought up the 79 people who were registered at Seabrook Village, and questioned whether any visual programming could be done in conjunction with Parks. For instance, placing monitors at various food stands in the summertime in places such as Sprinkle Park. Freeholder Burry stated this would likely be a welcomed idea. Renee requested that Rick be approached to see how, as Frank Wells put it, he could utilize his talents more.

Annual Report

Renee Swartz presented a note from Don at the Monmouth Parks System regarding the Annual Report. Renee noted the Library's Annual Report was not done in either 2014 or 2015; however Judi noted that the 2015 report would not be posted until April 2016. Renee stated one would be done, a combination of the two years of the transitional period, reflecting the change of home-grown talent. Don Burden said the Park's Annual Report was so well done, to which Freeholder Burry noted it is all done in-house. Mrs. Swartz noted it was sent to all of the mayors, and Judi noted we do this as well.

Commissioner Gray inquired if we are keeping track of the **Ivy Group's recommendations**. Mrs. Swartz said this was definitely the case, as every time we do something it behooves us to note it was an Ivy Group recommendation and in that way we are improving the Library.

Mrs. Swartz stated there should be a target date for the Annual Report, to ensure it is completed as soon as possible. Mrs. Swartz stated that based upon the morning meeting, it would seem that the majority of the information has been gathered. She went on to state there should be pictures of each

branch in the report. Mrs. Swartz noted the homegrown talent she found at Wall Township Library, (Sue Domas, Branch Manager) who started as a Library Assistant, went to library school, and now runs the branch. Mrs. Swartz felt this sort of success story should be included in the Annual Report, and the report should be submitted by the spring.

Library Publicity

Mrs. Swartz brought up the Red Oak Diner, located on Highway 35 in Hazlet, NJ. The diner has a “Kid's Night” every Tuesday night. Mrs. Swartz feels that there are lots of ideas around, that with savvy programming we can utilize. She noted that while there is lots of competition for people's attention, it makes our publicity all the more important. Muriel Smith inquired whether our brochures can be placed at the diner. Commissioner Abramov stated that place mats should be created for the children to color at the diner, to which Mrs. Swartz agreed was a great idea. In addition to diners, brochures should be circulated at movie theaters, YMCAs, churches, synagogues, and where ever people are. There is low overhead, only the minor printing cost and the cost of delivery. Judi Tolchin assured there are flyers sent out to various communities and organizations, senior centers, tourism boards, among others. The Library utilizes targeted marketing to ensure good reception to the materials sent. Renee noted that this is the new thing for the coming year, to think about how we get the message out.

Commissioner Abramov questioned whether there is an email mailing list, to which Ms. Tolchin confirmed. The Commission stated they were not aware of the electronic newsletter, but Ms. Tolchin would add each of their emails to the email list. Ms. Tolchin assured there were over 3,500 subscribers; our subscription service requires that people consent to be on the mailing list. Ms. Tolchin noted the digital promotion strategy of getting into electronic backpacks and electronic newsletters.

Renee Swartz inquired whether promotional materials were being sent to Brookdale, to which Ms. Tolchin confirmed. Don Burden brought up that promotional materials should be placed at train stations, as people have a tendency of looking at fliers.

Commissioner Wells suggested that the Library's newsletter be visible on Facebook as well, as he would then be able to share with his friends digitally. Judi Tolchin assured that many items visible on the newsletter are also posted on the Facebook page. Judi noted the newsletter could also be posted on the Facebook page as well, to which Renee stated it could not hurt to have the newsletter visible on both. Mrs. Swartz recapped that during this discussion a number of ideas have come forth which will enhance the publicity and the face of the library in the beginning of this New Year.

Chairperson Swartz inquired as to what happened with the Art Committee regarding the piece we were going to accept. Judi stated we have accepted the piece, and it is in our possession. Mrs. Swartz noted the piece will be presented at the next meeting.

Chairperson Swartz noted Commissioner Burden has written a new book, *The Story of Shrewsbury, Revisited 1965-2015*. The Commission praised Don Burden for his lovely book. Mrs. Swartz noted that there be a collection from every community that has purchased a book, and a community event will be held, perhaps in collaboration with the Friends' group. Don Buden went onto state the value of oral history in Monmouth County; Renee noted Flora Higgin's oral history project in 2000. Judi Tolchin stated

we have multiple copies, a few of which are in the NJ Room of the Headquarters branch. Mrs. Swartz stated that as the NJ Room is locked and seldom used, there should be a fun program to encourage books and use of the room.

Freeholder's Report

Freeholder Burry spoke about a conversation with Teri O'Connor this morning about the unacceptable indirect charges assessed to the Library. Mrs. Burry stated that she, more than anyone else, knows exactly how it came about – at the recommendation of County Finance. Freeholder Burry stated this must change, to which Teri stated once they bring up the budgets have Judi draft a presentation; the time has come again.

A Student Visitor

Renee Swartz inquired who the visitor was, and he announced himself as Tim Duffy, a Brookdale student. He is observing for his State, County, and Local Government class, where he must attend a local meeting of government. He went onto the Monmouth County website, and he found one he was interested in. Renee stated she was flattered the Library looked so interesting. After receiving an agenda, the visitor exited the meeting.

Meeting Dates

Judi stated we have discussed the meeting dates of 2016, alternating between Headquarters and Eastern Branch. Renee stated the first meeting of the year should start at Eastern Branch, as the Commission has been at Headquarters. Renee stated the schedule was subject to change, as they may go to other library branches later in 2016. Judi summarized the first meeting of 2016 will be on January 12, 2016 at Eastern Branch Library, alternating monthly between Headquarters and Eastern until December 13th.

A motion was made by James Gray to approve the meeting dates, and Frank Wells seconded the motion; unanimously approved.

Judi requested a motion be made for a closed, executive session at the January 12, 2016 meeting at Eastern Branch.

A motion was made by Frank Wells to approve the January 12th executive session, and James Grey seconded the motion; unanimously approved.

Financial Report

November Financials—Detail Budget, Check Writing, Cumulative Book Budget, and Reserve Budget;

In summary, the November financial report reflects the following expenditures:

- \$435,324,26 was spent in as salary and wages with a year-to-date total of \$5,316,626.59.
- Other expenses- \$336,983.69 expended in November with a year-to-date- total of \$4,819,710.10 including encumbered expenses
- The combined year-to-date spending totals \$10,136,336.69 applied to the adopted budget including encumbered expenses

- An annual Indirect cost voucher is submitted to the Commission for approval amounting to \$3,889,103.00, as reimbursement to the county.
- As of 11/30/15 \$330,812.03 remains in the Reserve Budget which will go into the fund balance unless there are additional items to be paid for 2014 in December 2015.

A motion was made by Nancy Grbelja to accept the financial report, and Don Burden seconded the motion; unanimously approved.

Motion was made to go into executive session by Frank Wells for the purpose of personnel issues, seconded by Nancy Grbelja, and unanimously approved.

Closed executive session began at 1:30 p.m.

Closed executive session ended at 2:01 p.m.

A motion was made to re-enter open session at 2:02 p.m. by Peter Doyle, and James Gray seconded the motion; unanimously approved.

The motion to approve the \$3,889,103 of indirect costs was made by Nancy Grbelja, with a stipulation that Craig Marshall attend the January 12th meeting for elaboration of the charges; seconded by Peter Doyle; unanimous with the exception of Grace Abramov as a point of principal.

Judi questioned who can sign for the Library on Muriel's contract. Renee stated that Judi Tolchin has this authority.

The motion to designate Judi Tolchin to sign Muriel Smith's publicity consulting contract was made by Peter Doyle; seconded by Frank Wells; unanimously approved. Peter Doyle went on to commend Muriel Smith who will be a great asset to the Library.

Judi noted a one word revision to the Code of Conduct, instead of "staff is permitted to ban patrons," staff should be changed to "Library Administration." Judi feels that all banning should rise to the level of Library Administration.

The motion to approve Judi's change to the Code of Conduct as stated was made by Nancy Grbelja; seconded by James Gray; unanimously approved.

Judi wanted to add one last thing, as she did not present the Director's report due to time constraints, the Friends' group is on a good pat to getting 501(c)3 status. This will go a long way in getting funding. Renee inquired whether Judi meets with the Friends' group regularly, to which Judi replied we are always invited to go, and the meetings are three or four times annually. Renee wishes to inform the Friends' the Commission is hoping to have an event, and we are in the process of working out the details. The program can be used as a fundraiser, and Judi noted the Museum Pass program is their first initiative. The Museum Pass Program will be launched around March or April, and the passes will be available at Headquarters, Eastern Branch, and the Holmdel Library.

Mrs. Swartz inquired what came of the Monmouth and Ocean County Reciprocal Borrowing Agreement. Judi Tolchin stated we are working on compiling and sharing statistics, and we must see if their board is agreeable to the \$6,000 maximum or whether they would like to come up with a different proposal. Reciprocal borrowing privileges have been extended as we work through the renegotiation of the agreement. Additionally Renee has requested information be gathered on libraries that charge for their

services, and the survey be gathered by the next meeting. Robyn Miller is also working on researching a policy for tutors.

Mrs. Swartz expressed the Commission's hopes that Craig Marshall accept their request to attend the January 12th meeting. Renee wished all in attendance a happy and healthy New Year.

The motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Nancy Grbelja; seconded by James Gray; unanimously approved.

Meeting adjourned at 2:10 pm.

The next meeting will be at Eastern Branch Library on January 12, 2016 at 12:00 p.m.

Submitted by Christina Roma